



## **Individual Development Plan (IDP) Resource Guide**

NPS  
Office of Learning & Development



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## Individual Development Plan

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) identifies an employee's development goals in the context of NPS' Strategic Plan. The plan contains training, education, and development activities to acquire or enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to maximize job performance. This will help to ensure that staff is prepared to carry out their responsibilities and contribute to the bureau's mission by helping them learn new skills, refresh old skills, and make use of emerging technologies.

An IDP gives the manager/supervisor<sup>1</sup> and the employee an opportunity to:

1. establish objectives that support both the unit's and employee's needs and goals;
2. give the employee a clear guide for working toward career goals and the supervisor a chance to channel the employee's efforts in ways that help the unit achieve its goals and mission; and
3. organize and set priorities for development experiences, that will help an employee:
  - learn new skills to improve current job performance
  - increase interest, satisfaction, and challenge in their current position
  - obtain knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to reach career goals that are aligned with NPS' strategic goals
  - prepare for increased responsibility.

### The IDP is **NOT**:

- A performance plan or appraisal—the IDP does not replace a performance plan or performance appraisal. Strengths and areas for development are being considered, but the employee is not being rated for performance appraisal purposes.  
Discussions about performance and development share some common themes, however, the focus of each discussion is fundamentally different and should not take place at the same time.
- A promise of promotion—the IDP does not guarantee advancement upon completion of the developmental objectives, but does increase the employee's ability to compete for future jobs as he or she develops skills.
- A binding document—when the supervisor and employee sign the IDP, it is simply an indication of intention and support for the employee's development. The employee may not always be able to take advantage of developmental opportunities because of budgetary or workload constraints, among other reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> To keep things simple, the term "supervisor" is used in the remainder of this guide.

## Roles of the Employee and the Supervisor

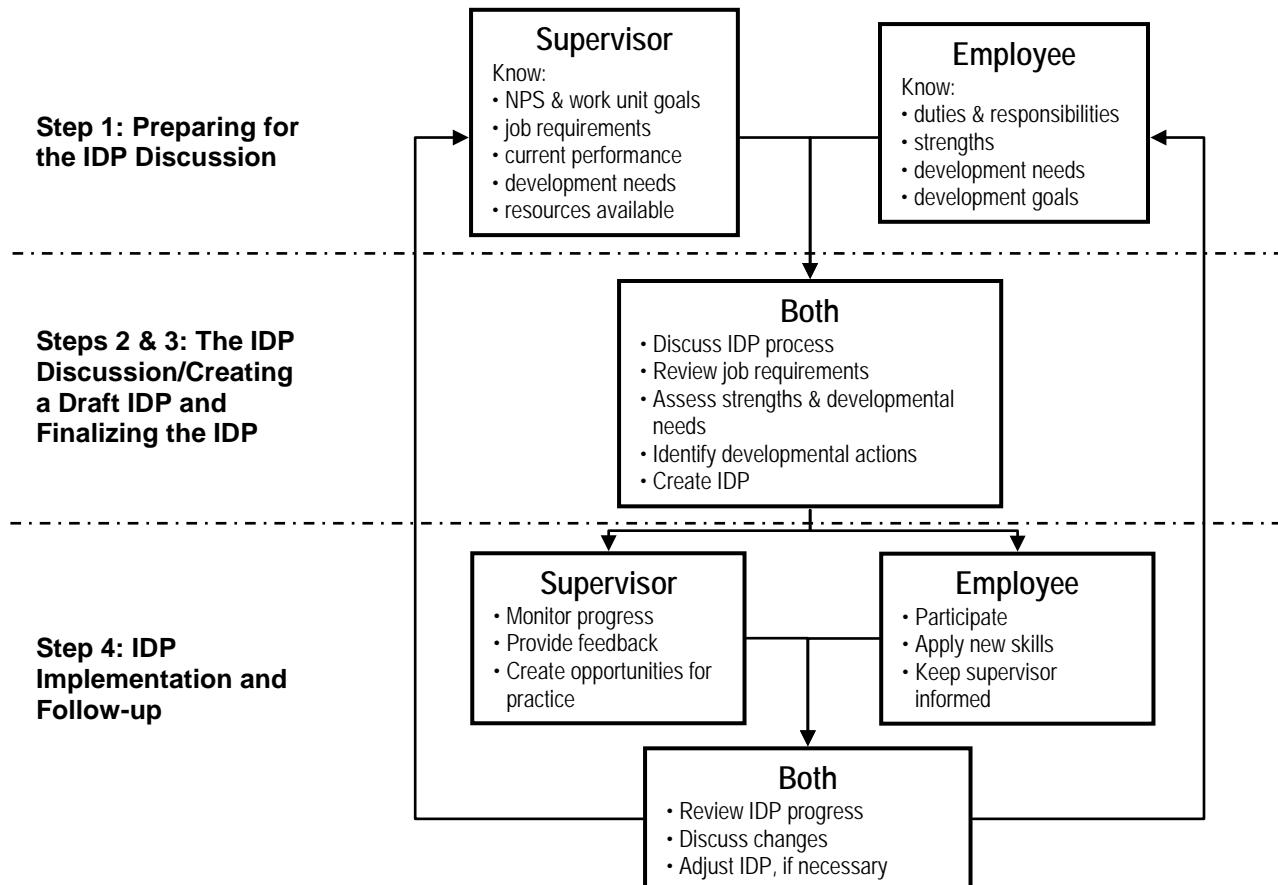
### **Role of the Employee:**

- Take charge of own development and actively participate in planning goals and determining how to meet them
- Assess existing skills and interests honestly, and assess the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to develop to perform the current job
- Set goals and objectives that will benefit NPS as well as enhance own career
- Find potential learning opportunities that will help meet current job requirements
- Actively participate in the development of the IDP and the discussions with the supervisor
- Identify ways of meeting personal career goals and enhancing work performance
- Develop objectives for higher level work, once full competency has been reached in current job
- Evaluate own progress and keep the supervisor informed

### **Role of the Supervisor:**

- Understand the IDP process and its purpose
- Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities the employee will need to succeed
- Provide a climate of trust and open communication where the employee can discuss his or her progress and career
- Provide feedback on the employee's performance in his or her current job
- Offer constructive feedback about strengths and areas for development regarding the employee's advancement potential and qualifications for other positions
- Act as a coach regarding possible developmental activities to achieve the objectives and goals defined in the IDP
- Define reasonable limits given NPS requirements and priorities, objectives, and needs of other employees
- Identify and ensure access to learning resources; support the employee's development, providing opportunities and funding if related to the unit's work and funds are available
- Ensure that at least one of the developmental actions identified on the IDP Worksheet is linked to one of NPS strategic goals
- Ensure that follow-up meetings occur as scheduled

## Individual Development Planning Process



The figure above shows the steps in the IDP process and who is responsible in each step.

### Step 1: Preparing for the IDP Discussion

The supervisor needs to consider:

- NPS & unit needs—to support/achieve NPS strategic goals and unit goals
- Requirements (knowledge, skills, and abilities) of the current position
- Developmental needs based on current performance
- Potential for growth based on employee's capabilities and interests and the resources that are available

The employee needs to consider:

- Requirements (knowledge, skills, and abilities) of the current position
- Strengths and developmental needs in the current position
- Personal developmental goals—short- and long-term career goals

## Step 2: The IDP Discussion and Creating a Draft IDP

The IDP discussion begins with the supervisor explaining the IDP process, the supervisor's role, and the employee's role.

The supervisor and employee review all the available information regarding the employee's development status. In this process, the supervisor and employee typically:

- Identify knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) or competencies required by the current work assignment
- Review and discuss strengths and areas for development in performing the current work assignment

The initial discussion should be a review of development needs within the employee's present position. Once that has occurred, the process can be repeated to identify objectives for future assignments.

The employee reviews the supervisor's expectations and the feedback received. The employee reviews prior job experience, training, and education and compares current skills to those needed for the job. With employee input, the supervisor defines the greatest priorities needing attention. These skill gaps form the basis of the employee's developmental goals.

Together, the supervisor and employee draft a plan by identifying developmental activities needed to reach the IDP goals. Using the IDP Worksheet as a guide, the supervisor and employee:

- Identify goals and competencies to be developed during the specified period
- Identify developmental experiences that address the competencies
- Define measures of success
- Identify how the supervisor can support the employee
- Identify potential barriers to success
- Draft an IDP proposing and scheduling possible developmental activities

*NOTE: A second meeting (Step 3) may be necessary in order to finalize the IDP—the supervisor and employee may need to look into developmental activities or programs or may need to confirm that the resources required by the IDP are available. If that information is available, Steps 2 and 3 can take place in a single meeting.*

### **Step 3: Finalizing the IDP**

In this step, the supervisor and the employee work together to develop the final plan.

The supervisor and employee:

- Discuss the draft IDP
- Create the final IDP
- Schedule meetings to check progress of the IDP

The supervisor and employee go over the plan, modify it as necessary, and determine what the supervisor and employee will do to move forward with the plan. When reviewing the draft IDP the supervisor and employee make sure:

- Knowledge, skills, and abilities have been identified that are important to the unit's success
- Developmental activities are realistic, given the unit's needs, budget, and staffing
- Developmental activities are the best possible options for learning what the employee needs
- Specific activities and schedules have been identified for each goal that allow the employee to continue to carry a fair share of the workload and perform it satisfactorily
- Development activities identified in the IDP are actually available as scheduled

The supervisor and employee make changes to the IDP and sign the IDP indicating support of the plan.

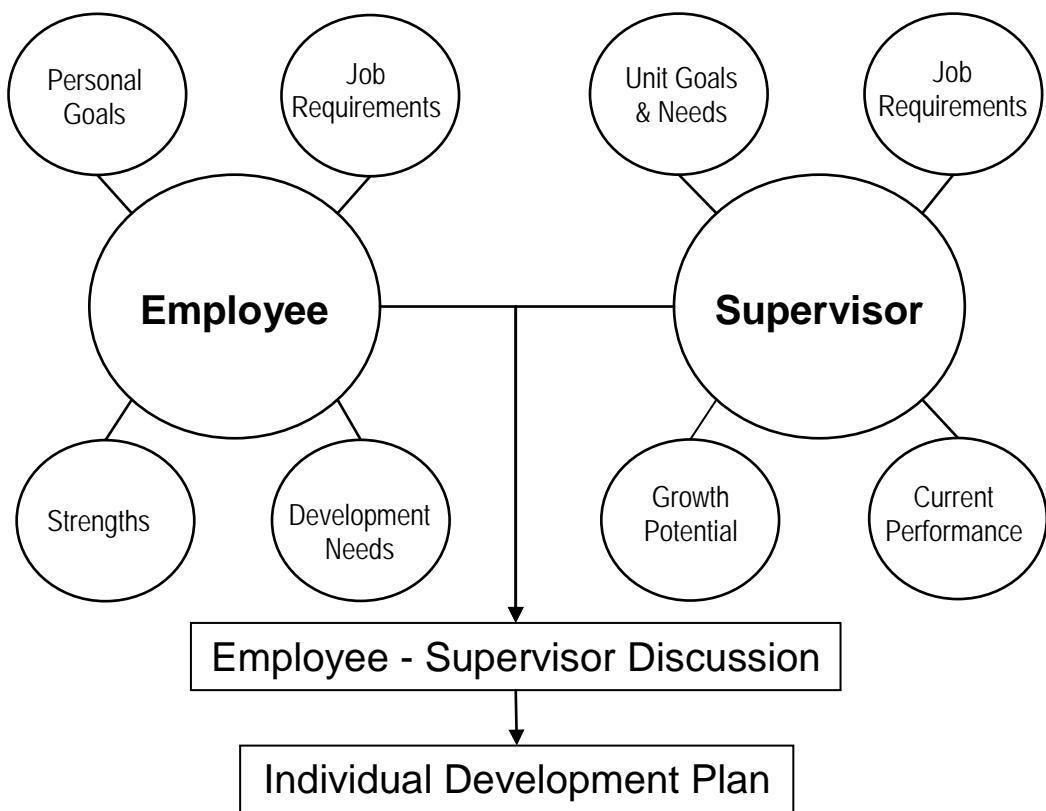
### **Step 4: IDP Implementation and Followup**

The employee begins working on developmental assignments. The employee applies the knowledge and skills as learned. The employee informs the supervisor of any problems encountered.

The supervisor monitors progress and gives feedback to the employee. As needed, the supervisor provides opportunities for the employee to apply new skills.

The supervisor and employee should meet periodically to determine if the IDP is meeting the developmental needs of the employee and the work unit. More frequent, ongoing discussions should be occurring to provide appropriate support throughout the employee's development. As the year moves along, the supervisor and employees must be alert for changes in the duties, resources, technology, or the work environment that make it necessary to adjust development plans.

## Preparing for the Individual Development Plan Discussion



The figure above illustrates how the supervisor and employee consider a variety of factors as they prepare for the IDP discussion. The table below lists possible sources for the information used during the discussion.

<b>Employee Sources:</b>	<b>Supervisor Sources:</b>
Personal Development Goals—short- & long-term career goals and interests	Unit Goals & Needs—NPS strategic goals; unit/facility goals; staff development needs; performance plan; emerging technologies
Job Requirements—position description; performance plan; duties & responsibilities from recent job postings; competency models	Job Requirements—position description; performance plans; duties & responsibilities from recent job postings; competency models
Strengths—own assessment of current level of knowledge and skills; successes in past assignments	Growth Potential—opportunities within office/facility/function; opportunities in other units/facilities; resources available
Development Needs—own assessment of current level of knowledge and skills; knowledge and skills needed in future	Current Performance—supervisor's assessment of competence in current position

## Questions for the Supervisor to Consider Before Drafting the IDP

Review work unit goals and the duties and responsibilities of the employee's current position. Think about what can be done to help the employee fully meet the requirements of the position and answer the following:

1. What developmental programs are currently available?
2. Will staffing allow an assignment into a different job within the unit?
3. Will staffing allow an assignment out of the unit?
4. Who is available to coach the employee?
5. Who is available to mentor the employee?
6. What training courses might be appropriate?
7. Are funds available?
8. Are there any other resource requirements to consider?

## Questions for the Employee to Consider Before Drafting the IDP

Review the duties and responsibilities for your current job. Think about the work you have been doing and answer the following:

- 1.** What assignments did I like doing?
- 2.** What assignments did I not like?
- 3.** What parts of my job am I good at? What work in general am I good at?
- 4.** Where are my weaknesses? Did these weaknesses hinder my getting my job done well?
- 5.** What kind of assignments would I like to have in the next year? Is there any different or new work I might like to get into?
- 6.** What work would I not like to be assigned this year, if possible?
- 7.** What skills or knowledge are necessary to do the work I'd like to get into?
- 8.** Do I have these skills/knowledge already? How strong or weak am I in these skills?
- 9.** What kinds of work experiences or training would I need to develop these skills?
- 10.** Is it feasible for me to develop these skills?

## Types of Developmental Activities

The following developmental activities are useful for developing individual competencies. The list is not all-inclusive and should stimulate other ideas for developmental assignments. We often think of development only in terms of formal training classes. There are many other, and often better, ways for people to learn. Budget and time constraints, as well as individual needs, make it unrealistic to have a developmental plan comprised entirely of formal training.

### Job Rotation

The employee temporarily moves into an existing position or through a series of existing positions. Assignments may be short or long term, between line and staff positions, and may include headquarters and field positions.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To broaden an employee's knowledge of other functions and departments within the NPS</li><li>• To prepare an employee for career advancement</li><li>• To maximize an employee's exposure to customers by moving him or her into positions that require customer interaction</li><li>• To motivate and challenge an employee that has been in the same position for a long time</li><li>• To cross-train members of a team</li><li>• To streamline work processes through fresh ideas that eliminate unnecessary practices or operations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Link job rotations to the organizational goals and individual learning needs</li><li>• Establish expectations and learning goals with the employee before the job rotation</li><li>• Check with the employee periodically to ensure expectations are being met</li><li>• Meet with the employee (at the end of the job rotation) to discuss:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>—lessons learned</li><li>—how these lessons can be applied to the employee's current job</li><li>—how the employee can educate others about what was learned during the job rotation</li></ul></li></ul>

## Special Assignment (Detail, Collateral Duties, or Committee/Task Force)

The employee performs temporary duties on a full-time or part-time basis. These temporary duties may be performed within the employee's current office or outside the organizational structure. An example of a special assignment is being assigned to chair an ad hoc cross-functional team. This process requires creativity and an eye for opportunity to identify a "stretch" activity with good probability for success.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To enhance an employee's knowledge or skills in a particular area</li><li>• To complete tasks or assignments when a mix of people with expertise in different areas is needed</li><li>• To prepare an employee for career advancement or develop specific knowledge or skills</li><li>• To broaden an employee's knowledge of other functions and departments within the NPS</li><li>• To motivate and challenge an employee that has been in the same position for a long time</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify specific work projects that relate to IDP objectives and development activities</li><li>• Link special assignments to NPS strategic goals and individual learning needs</li><li>• Establish expectations and learning goals with the employee before the special assignment</li><li>• Check with the employee periodically to ensure expectations are being met</li><li>• Meet with the employee (at the end of the special assignment) to discuss:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>—lessons learned</li><li>—how these lessons can be applied to the employee's current duties</li><li>—how the employee can educate others about what was learned during the special assignment</li></ul></li></ul>

## Coaching

A process for setting goals and providing feedback on performance to an employee. The coach may be the employee's supervisor or a co-worker with subject matter expertise. The process usually focuses on a specific task, competency, or project.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To support an employee who is assuming new job duties</li><li>• To develop or provide new skills through on-the-job training</li><li>• To introduce new procedures or technologies</li><li>• To enhance performance and correct deficiencies</li><li>• To prepare employees for career development</li><li>• To develop members of a work team</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare by collecting necessary information on current performance levels and needs</li><li>• Set learning objectives and expectations together with the employee</li><li>• Mutually develop and agree on a course of action for enhancing performance</li><li>• Facilitate learning and enhance performance through using observation, listening, and feedback skills</li><li>• Give constructive feedback and encourage and reward accomplishments</li><li>• Schedule follow-up coaching sessions</li></ul>

## Mentoring

A formal or informal relationship between senior and junior employees for the purpose of supporting learning and development. The mentor provides ongoing support, advice, and career direction to an employee. A mentor typically holds a higher position in the NPS and is usually outside of the employee's line of supervision. The mentor can assume the role of teacher, sponsor, counselor, guide, model, developer of skills and intellect, and supporter. For a mentoring program to work, both mentor and the employee must be motivated to participate in such a relationship.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To continue the development of a talented and skilled employee</li><li>• To groom employees who show high potential for management or leadership responsibilities</li><li>• To retrain and prepare an employee for a new job or function</li><li>• To assimilate new employees into the NPS by educating them about the norms, culture, and politics of the NPS</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarify what will be achieved through the mentoring relationship</li><li>• Listen, coach, counsel, and motivate</li><li>• Allow mentor and employee to select each other</li></ul>

## Learning Groups

Gathering of employees who meet to focus on their own learning and development in a particular interest area, such as information technology, public speaking, or career paths.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To provide a mechanism for obtaining knowledge and skills when there is no formal training available in a particular area</li><li>• To provide a way of learning when the environment or technology is changing so rapidly that there is no time to develop a formal training program</li><li>• To reinforce learning through the ongoing peer support provided by regular learning team meetings</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiate a learning group if there is a need or an interest in a particular area</li><li>• Hold the learning group meetings during times when people are more likely to attend (e.g., lunchtime meetings or early morning meetings)</li><li>• Make the learning available to group members through newsletters, email messages, etc.</li><li>• Consider using technology to augment face-to-face meetings</li></ul>

## **Self-Development (Professional Reading, Participation in Professional Organizations, Volunteer Work, and Networking)**

Taking personal responsibility for one's own learning and development through a process of assessment, reflection, and application.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To continually update skills and to remain marketable in the workplace</li><li>• To broaden an employee's network of contacts inside and outside of the NPS</li><li>• To determine future career direction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professional Reading - Implement a program of reading periodicals and books. Seek opportunities in the workplace to apply the reading and to discuss potential applications</li><li>• Participation in Professional Organizations - These organizations offer opportunities to exchange practical information with colleagues inside and outside of the government. Interaction with others sharing occupational interests can contribute to state-of-the-art knowledge and professional growth.</li><li>• Volunteer Work</li><li>• Networking - Developing personal contacts &amp; maintaining good channels of communication throughout the NPS helps to increase awareness of developmental opportunities and to raise visibility inside and outside of the NPS</li></ul>

## Shadowing Assignment

Observing another person perform tasks and demonstrate competencies. Assignments can be as short or as long as necessary to acquire the needed learning.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To increase awareness about the scope and nature of a target position/competency</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can range from a few hours to observe methods or processes, to several weeks in order to become familiar with the work</li><li>• Particularly beneficial when assignments are timed to coincide with key projects, tasks, meetings, etc.</li><li>• A great deal of learning occurs when the person being shadowed candidly discusses the rationale of decisions and actions, answers probing questions, comments on alternatives, and shares lessons learned from past decisions which resulted in both positive and less desirable outcomes</li></ul>

## Training

Learning that is provided in order to improve performance on the present job. An event designed to address a knowledge or skill deficit.

When to Use	How to Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When there is an identifiable knowledge/skill deficit</li><li>• When new knowledge/skills are required in the current position</li><li>• When new knowledge/skills are required in a new position</li><li>• When changes have been made or new technologies introduced into the work place</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct individual needs assessment</li><li>• Identify training outcomes that satisfy need</li><li>• Identify objectives that will achieve desired outcomes</li><li>• Determine the most effective/efficient delivery mode(s)</li><li>• Discuss goals for training with supervisor or employee</li><li>• Schedule training</li><li>• Follow up with supervisor or employee</li></ul>

# IDP WORKSHEET

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager/Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal	Developmental Action	Measure of Success	Resources Required	Manager/Supervisor's Role	Dates	Strategic Goal

## IDP Worksheet Description

### **Goal**

The knowledge, skill, ability, or competency that will be developed as a result of the development actions. The learning objective must be identified before the appropriate developmental activity can be chosen. Remember that the development goal should be linked to one of NPS' Strategic Goals.

### **Developmental Action**

The specific activities that the employee will engage in to achieve the IDP goal. Refer to pages 9 – 16 of this guide for examples of developmental activities.

### **Measure of Success**

How the employee and supervisor will know when the employee has successfully achieved the goal. The performance measure that will indicate successful completion of the developmental action.

### **Resources Required**

What is necessary for the employee to engage in the developmental action. Resources can include funds, workhours, other employees (e.g., subject matter/area expert), documentation and job aids, etc.

### **Manager/Supervisor's Role**

What the supervisor will do to support the employee during this process. This support will always include regular feedback and encouragement.

### **Start /End Dates**

The date that the developmental action will begin and end.

### **Strategic Goal**

The NPS strategic goal that the development action supports. More than one strategic goal may be linked to the IDP Goal.

## IDP Worksheet Examples

### EMPLOYEE:

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Developmental Action</b>	<b>Measure Of Success</b>	<b>Resources Required</b>	<b>Manager/ Supervisor's Role</b>	<b>Start /End</b>	<b>Strategic Goal</b>
Enter data into database	Work with subject matter expert—observe, enter data with guidance, enter data without guidance. Two hours per week doing this work.	Accurate (100%) and timely entry of data into database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time—16 hours</li> <li>• Access to SME</li> <li>• Documentation or job aid for software</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free employee from regular duties—backfill, adjust schedules, etc.</li> <li>• Feedback and encouragement</li> </ul>	7/5/11 thru 9/9/11	

### SUPERVISOR/TEAM LEADER:

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Developmental Action</b>	<b>Measure Of Success</b>	<b>Resources Required</b>	<b>Manager/ Supervisor's Role</b>	<b>Start /End</b>	<b>Strategic Goal</b>
Competent in Conflict Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend NPS training course on Conflict Management</li> <li>• Apply training knowledge and skills to a real work situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of course</li> <li>• Report to supervisor about content and action plans</li> <li>• Successful resolution of a conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hours to backfill position</li> <li>• Funds for training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find funding for training</li> <li>• Communicate expectations to employee</li> <li>• Opportunity to try out new skills without fear of failure</li> <li>• Feedback &amp; encouragement</li> </ul>	8/3/11 thru 8/5/11 (class) 8/11 thru 9/11 (apply)	



## **APPENDIX**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. ***Who initiates the IDP?***

The supervisor has responsibility for developing employees. However, the employees must take the initiative to identify developmental needs and opportunities. The employees may write the draft IDP and then, after discussion with the supervisor, write the final document.

### 2. ***Who should have an IDP?***

Anyone who wants one.

### 3. ***What's the relationship of the IDP with other career development initiatives?***

Developmental needs that are identified in the IDP can include those that were determined through another program (e.g., New Superintendent Academy, Fundamentals, or Career Academy). The IDP is a way of recording any developmental activities that the employee and supervisor have agreed to, regardless of what program or initiative generated the discussion.

### 4. ***How many activities can be on an IDP?***

Typically, one to three activities for the next year (performance cycle), ranked in priority order.

### 5. ***Any limits on how much time can be taken up by developmental activities?***

It's up to the supervisor but the employee should be able to satisfactorily perform the tasks identified in their performance plans, while making progress on development activities.

### 6. ***How often are IDPs created?***

The IDP is often a yearly plan that should be monitored and revised as necessary. There should be periodic follow-up discussions.

### 7. ***Will an IDP signed by my supervisor guarantee that I get all the development listed?***

No. The IDP is a plan, not a contract. The supervisor's signature indicates an agreement with the plan, understanding that there will be modifications as the unit goals change, as the employee progresses and as other workplace requirements demand.

**8. *What happens if what we agreed on can't or doesn't happen?***

The IDP is a plan and a tool for communication. Neither party is penalized if what is proposed can't or doesn't take place. If the targets are still agreed to be worthwhile, then rescheduling would be appropriate; if they are no longer worthwhile, they should be re-evaluated by both employee and supervisor and the IDP changed to reflect that change.

**9. *How much of the development outlined in my IDP will be funded by my benefitting account, or the NPS?***

Many of the developmental opportunities, such as job rotations and details, will not have a monetary cost. Payment for those opportunities that do (e.g., classroom training) will depend on supervisory approval, NPS budget and NPS and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidelines about reimbursement or payment.

**10. *Will the completion of an IDP guarantee me a new job or promotion?***

No. The IDP is geared for present job skill improvement and will enhance your qualifications for future positions, but does not target you for a specific vacancy.

**11. *Can an IDP include other training besides formal training courses?***

Yes. Options include independent study, details, on-the-job training, etc.

**12. *I'm in an organization that offers little opportunity for advancement. What can an IDP do for me?***

An IDP will give you an opportunity to get some control over improving your performance in your current position and identifying developmental requirements for your career goals.

**13. *Who has responsibility for implementation of the IDP?***

Both the employee and the supervisor have responsibility for staying on top of developmental activities and following through on the plan.

**14. *IDP & Performance Plan: Are they the same?***

An IDP supports a performance plan. In other words, if your performance plan calls for you having certain knowledge, skill, or ability, then you would identify developmental options to gain it.

**15. *Do new hires get an IDP?***

Sure. It may help to wait a few months so that the employee and their supervisor will have enough information to know the employee's strengths and development needs to meet the requirements of the job.

## Competency – Developing Others (adapted from OPM Competency Dictionary)

### **Definition**

Develops the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organization by providing ongoing feedback and by providing developmental opportunities to learn through formal and informal methods.

### **Importance**

Human Capital was coined as a term to underscore the central role and value that people play in the success and strategic agility of any enterprise. The metaphor extends its validity to wise investment and capital growth strategies. People will only achieve what they are truly capable of when they are supported by ongoing development initiatives, an organizational culture of learning and idea exchange, and leadership that takes the initiative to help others by providing direction, support, and a positive role model. Of the 12 elements that the Gallup Organization found which consistently correlated with a high performance culture, a full 7 relate to this competency: knowing what is expected of one; having one's talents recognized and used; timely recognition of good work; being cared about as a person; being encouraged in one's further development; having opportunities to learn and grow; and talking with someone at least every 6 months about one's progress. Beyond this compelling evidence linking investment in learning to high performance and productivity, developing others is the internal organizational expression of service motivation.

### **Elements**

- A. Establish, implement and evaluate strategic developmental plans, to include classroom and non-classroom based learning opportunities that enhance the capacity of employees to meet the changing demands of an ill-defined future.
- B. Support a learning culture which supports the risk-free exchange of ideas and that broadly promotes learning.
- C. Coach others, using effective goal-defining, feedback, and follow-through approaches to build others' confidence, commitment, skills and knowledge.
- D. Mentor new and younger employees to support acculturation, career growth, networking, political savvy and external awareness; enlighten and inspire.

**Foundational:** All employees are expected to contribute to the exchange of ideas with others. Those with more experience, skills and knowledge are expected to share them, helping others grow. An especially helpful role is that of Mentor, in which those familiar with the organization help new or younger members to understand the culture of the organization and its political milieu, and to connect to useful networks and other resources. All employees must also become adept in delivering useful and constructive feedback to peers regarding cooperation, support, and collaboration.

B. Support a “learning organization” culture which supports the risk-free exchange of ideas and that broadly promotes learning.	C. Coach others, using effective goal-defining, feedback, and follow-through approaches to build others’ confidence, commitment, skills and knowledge.	D. Mentor new, younger and less experienced employees to support acculturation, career growth, networking, political savvy and external awareness; enlighten and inspire.
Distinguishing Behaviors	Distinguishing Behaviors	Distinguishing Behaviors
<b>Supports a workplace and culture that welcomes and values new thought, different perspectives, and non-conventional approaches.</b>  Makes superiors aware of potential opportunities or risks inherent in a chosen policy/action.  Collaborates, sharing plans, information and resources.  Renders best counsel, being honest and frank while maintaining respect and civility.  Keeps others in the loop.	<b>Uses personal authority to influence and inspire others to further advancement towards shared goals, to work in collaboration, to find common interests, and to contribute their best.</b>  Is a personal model of service to others.  Can shape, guide and facilitate group processes.  Listens attentively to others to hear and understand what is being said, and to assess what is meant.  Is articulate; supports communication with fact and research.  Is skilled at framing the issue from many angles in order for alternate perspectives and opposing views to find common ground. Recognizes and values the talents of others.  Can express one’s position and feelings clearly and concisely without accusation, sarcasm or hostility.  Is actively involved in mediating misunderstandings among peers.	<b>Engages others; inspires, motivates and guides others toward goal accomplishment.</b>  Leads by example.  Is sought out by peers for expertise and counsel.  Demonstrates empathy with others and can help others understand differing perspectives.  Builds trust through reliability and authenticity.

**Team Leaders:** A team leader must be able to identify gaps in knowledge and skill on a team; and promote individuals' further technical development so as to keep the team current with the latest knowledge and information. They must identify and make assignments that challenge abilities and develop self confidence in others; they must show insight into individuals' learning styles and use that knowledge in making the best use of developmental assignments. Clear, constructive and forward-focused feedback is important both to keep projects on track as well as to the development of positive, productive group dynamics. Team leaders must establish a team culture of inclusiveness and openness to ideas, change and differing perspectives that encourages all to contribute to achieving group/team goals.

B. Support a “learning organization” culture which supports the risk-free exchange of ideas and that broadly promotes learning.	C. Coach others, using effective goal-defining, feedback, and follow-through approaches to build others’ confidence, commitment, skills and knowledge.	D. Mentor new, younger, and less experienced employees to support acculturation, career growth, networking, political savvy and external awareness; enlighten and inspire.
<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>	<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>	<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>
<p><b>Champions the democratic ideals of fairness and civility in the workplace.</b></p> <p>Realigns perspectives and processes to move from fixing the blame to fixing the problem.</p> <p>Uses after-action-reviews to assess performance and analyze lessons learned.</p>	<p><b>Builds team skills through assignments, coaching and training that are related both to task accomplishment as well as to relationship building and group processes.</b></p> <p>Gives others structured autonomy to approach issues in their own way, including the opportunity to make and learn from mistakes.</p> <p>Recognizes and addresses team and team member strengths and potential fatal flaws in knowledge and performance.</p> <p>Seeks and provides learning opportunities for individual team members and for the team as a functional whole.</p> <p>Uses a variety of techniques to help team/group move beyond what is, towards continual improvement.</p> <p>Gives decision making authority to the team where appropriate. Avoids taking over all decisions.</p> <p>Builds the problem solving ability of the team.</p> <p>Gives feedback to the group as a whole and/or to individual group members in a way that enables positive performance change.</p>	<p><b>Understands the concept of Human Capital, treats employees as public assets.</b></p> <p>Draws out people and ideas and connects them with other people for positive outcomes.</p> <p>Engenders an “esprit de Corps” that enables other to find continual meaning and resourcefulness for dealing with uncertainty, change and hard times.</p> <p>Creates a team culture that fosters performance, pride and purpose.</p> <p>Can communicate changing organizational context.</p> <p>Instills a sense of opportunity and possibility in the team’s view of change.</p>

**Supervisors:** Must identify and then build upon the strengths of employees by providing support for traditional and creative developmental opportunities. They analyze actions and implement procedures, such as after-action-reviews that enable learning from past outcomes. They ensure that information from this analysis that is applicable to other organizational areas is disseminated. Supervisors ensure that all employees have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and link these through planning and follow-up IDP activities to both individual job performance and to the agency's strategic needs. Supervisors monitor and mentor successful performance by providing timely, fact-based feedback. They practice effective and appropriate delegation of responsibilities and tasks as a major developmental activity for others. They understand the role of career coaching as an indispensable investment in human capital resources.

B. Support a “learning organization” culture which supports the risk-free exchange of ideas and that broadly promotes learning.	C. Coach others, using effective goal-defining, feedback, and follow-through approaches to build others’ confidence, commitment, skills and knowledge.	D. Mentor new, younger, and less experienced employees to support acculturation, career growth, networking, political savvy and external awareness; enlighten and inspire.
Distinguishing Behaviors	Distinguishing Behaviors	Distinguishing Behaviors
<b>Fosters knowledge-sharing and learning across units.</b>  Uses various communication tools, group affiliations and networks to disseminate knowledge and lessons learned.  Keeps managers informed of valuable lessons learned as well as of final project results.	<b>Defines, clearly communicates and measures progress against rigorous outcome criteria for successful performance.</b>  Reviews performance against clear standards and expectations.  Addresses poor performance.  Provides regular feedback and coaches individuals and groups about performance.  Ensures that IDPs are in place for all employees which link individual development with agency mission and strategic needs.  Reinforces knowledge, skills and new behaviors gained through training and development by helping employees apply these on the job.  Provides one on one time for each employee that focuses on his/her development.	<b>Serves employees as a source of wisdom and expertise on technical and organizational matters.</b>  Assists others to understand and handle the forces and opportunities that require changes of thought and approach.  Supports the development of individuals and encourages them to take responsibility for their own development.  Understands the psychological and emotional needs of others.  Uses techniques that help employees guide their own growth and development.  Provides a visible anchor for others in times of change by demonstrating ability to modify approach and demonstrating a personal ownership of the agency’s vision.

**Managers:** Assess and identify talent and potential and fosters these through a broad range of development strategies. They must clearly define training goals and expectations and link them to Agency strategic goals and objectives, and must incorporate measures of effectiveness into all training and development initiatives. Managers design and implement Knowledge Management systems to transfer learning and share it across the organization.

A. Establish, implement and evaluate strategic developmental plans, to include classroom and non-classroom based learning opportunities that enhance the capacity of employees to meet the changing demands of an ill-defined future.	B. Support a “learning organization” culture which supports the risk-free exchange of ideas and that broadly promotes learning.	C. Coach others, using effective goal-defining, feedback, and follow-through approaches to build others’ confidence, commitment, skills and knowledge.	D. Mentor new, younger, and less experienced employees to support acculturation, career growth, networking, political savvy and external awareness; enlighten and inspire.
<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>	<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>	<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>	<b>Distinguishing Behaviors</b>
<b>Ensures that training and development programs meet needed competencies and measures the results.</b>  Clearly defines training goals and expectations for organization, linking individual development to agency strategic objectives, mission and goals.  Uses a systematic process and the advice of experts to analyze competency gaps, plan appropriate developmental interventions, collect relevant performance data, and evaluate the results of the interventions.  Incorporates rigorous measures of effectiveness into all training and development initiatives.  Where applicable and feasible uses evaluation methodologies to calculate ROI of training initiatives.  Integrates people issues into the business planning cycle.	<b>Applies tools and techniques of knowledge Management to capture explicit learning and share it widely across the organization.</b>  Identifies and disseminates best practices from high-performing organizations with similar missions.  Helps the members of the organization learn from customers and stakeholders and to translate that learning into improved ways of performing.  Creates opportunities for employees to contribute their views on the agency’s goals and strategies for achieving them, to include innovative ideas and process improvements.  Builds behind-the-scenes support for knowledge sharing and the expression of new ideas.  Participates in setting expectations for learning.	<b>Develops and implements performance management systems that are aligned with the strategic plan, which maximize employee talent and contributions.</b>  Reinforces new concepts, skills and behaviors learned by providing opportunities for employees to use new skills and by modeling the behaviors they expect to see as a result of training.  Restructures initiatives, pushing down decision making to lower levels in order to develop talent.  Recognizes and communicates contributions and progress towards visionary goals.  Understands the strategic advantage of building on employee strengths and talents.	<b>Communicates performance expectations to employees which make the link to the organization’s mission and strategic plan clear and compelling.</b>  Distills the vision and new ideas into focused messages that can inspire others in times of change.  Champions individual and organizational learning.

## Guidelines for Giving and Receiving Feedback

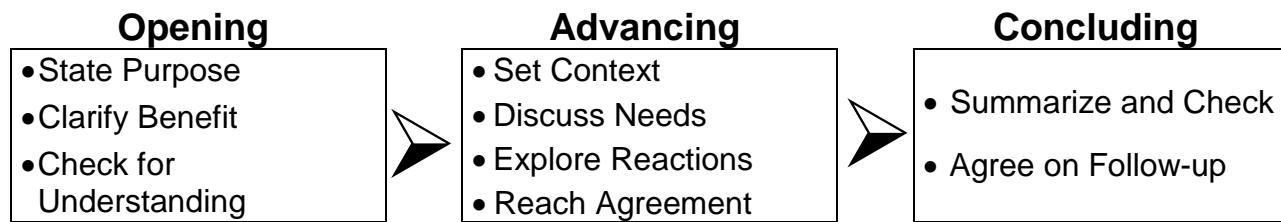
### **When giving feedback it should:**

- Be specific rather than general
- Be descriptive rather than evaluative
- Be tied to specific goals
- Be relevant to a specific task
- Be within the employee's span of control
- Be well timed and given in the appropriate time and place
- Keep communication open
- Be positive as well as corrective

### **When receiving feedback:**

- Listen and paraphrase
- Be non-defensive
- Ask for clarification
- Maintain eye contact and appropriate posture
- Keep an open mind
- Don't overreact
- View as an opportunity for improvement
- Acknowledge the feedback and points of agreement
- Respond to the points of disagreement

## Leading the IDP Discussion



### Opening

- Try to establish a **comfortable climate**. A relaxed, open climate will support a free exchange of information.
- Identify the **purpose** and **benefit** of the discussion with the employee and be sure to **check for understanding** and agreement to proceed. It is important that the employee understands the significance of the discussion in terms of the benefits to him or her as well as to the NPS.

### Advancing

- **Set context.** Establish the context of the discussion by discussing the IDP process, the supervisor's role, and the employee's role. Review all the available information regarding the employee's development status. In this process, you will typically identify knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) or competencies required by the current work assignment.
- **Discuss developmental needs.** Review and discuss strengths and areas for development in performing the current work assignment.
- **Explore the reactions of the employee.** Begin with fact-finding to get the employee's view, confirm your understanding of that view, and finally, give your perspective on the situation.
- **Reach agreement on a developmental plan.** Together, develop a plan of action by identifying developmental activities needed to reach the IDP goals. Gain mutual understanding and define areas of agreement and disagreement. Optimally, this kind of fact-finding exchange will result in an agreement on developmental goals.

### Concluding

- **Agree on a schedule for follow-up.** Determine a time to follow up this discussion, to review progress on developmental actions, and to offer your support.
- **Summarize discussion and plan.** Review the plan and express confidence that the employee can meet the agreed-upon developmental goals. This ensures that the expectations are understood, closes the discussion on a positive note, and counteracts any doubts that may have been expressed.

